

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 12, 2014

The Honorable John Pistole  
Administrator  
Transportation Security Administration  
601 South 12th Street  
Arlington, VA 20598

Dear Administrator Pistole:

I write today to follow up on the critical safety issue we spoke about at last week's hearing in the Senate Commerce Committee. I was shocked to find out that your agency had completed a three-month-long inspection and found San Jose International Airport to be in full compliance with the TSA-approved Airport Security plan only three weeks before a 15-year-old boy was able to breach the airport perimeter fence and climb undetected into the wheel well of a parked aircraft.

While we know that there is not one perfect solution when it comes to keeping our airports safe, it's also clear that a layered defense is critical to preventing such breaches from happening again. What truly concerned me in this situation was that the Airport Security Plan for San Jose Airport did not require a layered defense in keeping the perimeter fence area safe from unlawful access.

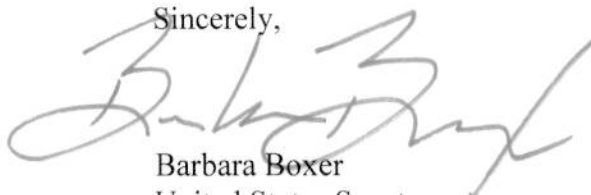
During the hearing, you mentioned the costs associated with increasing layers of security at airports. When it comes to aviation security, I think we all agree these improvements are worthy investments, and an airport from my state, Palm Springs International Airport, has shown that the costs do not have to be prohibitive.

Last July, Palm Springs International Airport completed a project to secure their perimeter fencing through the installation of a radar system called the Perimeter Intrusion Detection System (PIDS), which can detect perimeter breaches and provide instant alerts. The airport also replaced over 10,000 feet of old fence line and added more wireless closed-circuit television (CCTV) security cameras in restricted-access areas. In total, the upgrades cost less than \$3 million, with the new PIDS accounting for less than one-third of the cost. The multi-layered approach to security that is in place at Palm Springs International Airport includes just one example of the types of technologies that exist today and are ready to be deployed at airports around our country.

What is TSA doing to validate and incorporate new security technologies in airport defense? In light of the breach at San Jose, which served as a major wake-up call, do you believe that the current standards in Airport Security Plans are in need of an update? If so, is TSA currently taking steps to improve Airport Security Plans, and what steps are those?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer  
United States Senator